IN THE DRAWINGS:

Please enter the attached corrected drawings Figs. 1 & 3, wherein text labels are being added into the boxes, to replace Figs. 1 & 3 as originally filed. A Letter to the Draftsperson is also submitted herewith.

REMARKS

The above amendments to the above-captioned application along with the following remarks are being submitted as a full and complete response to the Official Action dated June 29, 2006. In view of the above amendments and the following remarks, the Examiner is respectfully requested to give due reconsideration to this application, to indicate the allowability of the claims, and to pass this case to issue.

Status of the Claims

Claims 1-8 are under consideration in this application. Claims 1-8 are being amended, as set forth in the above marked-up presentation of the claim amendments, in order to more particularly define and distinctly claim applicant's invention.

All the amendments to the claims and the specification are supported by the specification. Applicants hereby submit that no new matter is being introduced into the application through the submission of this response.

Formality Rejection

Figs. 1 and 3 were objected to for boxes lacking necessary textual labels therein. Also, the Examiner objected to the specification for several errors.

As indicated, the drawings are being amended as required by the Examiner. Accordingly, the withdrawal of the outstanding informality rejection is in order, and is therefore respectfully solicited.

Prior Art Rejection

Claims 1-8 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over US 2005/0108219 of De La Huerga (hereinafter "Huerga") in view of US 2004/0059755 of Farrington (hereinafter "Farrington"). This rejection has been carefully considered, but is most respectfully traversed, as more fully discussed below.

A method of outputting a database search information in a database system for retrieving records using a search key and retrieving records from a plurality of databases in a chain-reactive manner, the method comprises: a step of retrieving a record (e.g., a row in Fig. 2) by entering an initial/1st search key (e.g., "G0001") into an initial/1st database *("initiation of search"* p. 6, line 7; Step 502 in Fig. *6);* <u>a step of retrieving a subsequent/2nd record by</u> <u>entering a subsequent/2nd search key (e.g., "H0002"), which is contained in the retrieved</u>

record and different from the initial/1st search key, into a subsequent/2nd database different from the initial/1st database *in a chain-reactive manner* from the initial/1st database via a plurality of sequent databases to provide subsequently retrieved records as search results (p. 3, 4th paragraph; p. 6, 2nd paragraph); a step of outputting, in the case that a first subsequent record retrieved from a first subsequent database on a chain-reactive search path does not contain a subsequent search key to be entered into a second subsequent database that is subsequently searched, information for identifying a first subsequent record that does not contain the subsequent search key and information for identifying the first subsequent database having the first subsequent record (steps 503-504 in Fig. *6; "when the record retrieving fails, the failure is detected in step 503 and the routine advances to step 504..."* p.6, last two paragraphs).

The invention recited in claim 5 is directed to a program for causing a computer to carry out the method of outputting database search information in a database system for retrieving records using a search key and retrieving records from a plurality of databases in a chain-reactive manner, as recited in claim 1.

As such, a user can recognize that a number of records cannot be retrieved from the terminal database, the user can easily and visually recognize any intervening database having a record that does not contain a search key for the subsequent database, and the user can assume the reason why the search key is not contained by directly referring to the record (p. 8, last 4 paragraphs).

Applicants respectfully contend that none of the cited prior art references teaches or suggests such a step/module of "retrieving a subsequent/2nd record by entering a subsequent/2nd search key (e.g., "H0002"), which is contained in the retrieved record and different from the initial/1st search key, into a subsequent/2nd database different from the initial/1st database *in a chain-reactive manner* from the initial/1st database via a plurality of sequent databases to provide subsequently retrieved records as search result" or such a step/module of "outputting, in the case that a first subsequent record retrieved from a first subsequent database on a chain-reactive search path does not contain a subsequent search key to be entered into a second subsequent database that is subsequently searched, information for identifying a first subsequent record that does not contain the subsequent search key and information for identifying the first subsequent database having the first subsequent record", all according to the invention.

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In contrast, Huerga discloses a _tiered_ and content based searching of databases, rather than retrieving records from a plurality of databases _in a chain-reactive manner,_ as now recited in claims 1 & 5. Farrington also does not provide such a teaching.

In addition, as admitted by the Examiner, Huerga does not disclose the outputting step of the invention (p. 3, paragraph no. 9, line 5 of the outstanding Office Action). Farrington was relied upon by the Examiner to teach such a step. However, Farrington only retrieves _database descriptions_ (which define database characteristics, such as a database record structure, and relationships between segments in a database record; [0012]; [0016]), rather than _database data_ themselves. Farrington parses the PSBs, DBDs, and programming language _data structures_ and displays the overlapping _data structures_ represented in a hierarchical tree view of available segments and fields ([0010], lines 9-12). Had Farrington accessed a database, some sort of parts to be provided with actual data values for the key fields of the sought record should be shown on the screens in the drawings of the disclosure.

More importantly, Farrington only enables users to select segments and fields that are associated with _a valid path_ in the hierarchical tree view and to view _invalid paths_ ([0010], lines 13-20). Such valid or invalid paths are invalid _data structure paths,_ rather than any records of data linked via search keys as the invention. Farrington simply does not use search keys to trigger a chain reaction, as does the invention. In particular, a valid path 113 in Farrington's hierarchical tree structure 134 includes data structural fields and data structural segments, such as the key fields 120 from the root segment 212 to the bottom segment 222 and the segments 116 in direct descent from root segment 212 to the bottom segment 222 ([0044]), which have nothing to do with any "first subsequent record retrieved from a first subsequent database on a chain-reactive search path which contains a subsequent search key to be entered into a second subsequent database that is subsequently searched" of the present invention.

In comparison to claim 3, Farrington accepts additional valid input to select another segment thereby making the valid path an invalid path. As such, Farrington's invalid path has nothing to do with any "first subsequent record retrieved from a first subsequent database on a chain-reactive search path which does NOT contain a subsequent search key to be entered into a second subsequent database that is subsequently searched" of the present invention. Therefore, Farrington does not teach the outputting step as now recited in claims 1 & 5, i.e. "outputting, in the case that a first subsequent record retrieved from a first subsequent database on a chain-reactive search path does not contain a subsequent search key to be

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entered into a second subsequent database that is subsequently searched, information for identifying a first subsequent record that does not contain the subsequent search key and information for identifying the first subsequent database having the first subsequent record."

Applicants contend that the prior art fails to teach or support each and every feature of the present invention as recited in independent claims 1 and 5. As such, the present invention as now claimed is distinguishable and thereby allowable over the rejections raised in the Office Action. The withdrawal of the outstanding prior art rejections is in order, and is thus respectfully solicited.
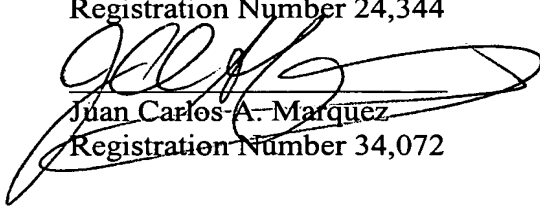
Conclusion

In view of all the above, clear and distinct differences as discussed exist between the present invention as now claimed and the prior art reference upon which the rejections in the Office Action rely, Applicants respectfully contend that the prior art references cannot anticipate the present invention or render the present invention obvious. Rather, the present invention as a whole is distinguishable, and thereby allowable over the prior art.

Favorable reconsideration of this application is respectfully solicited. Should there be any outstanding issues requiring discussion that would further the prosecution and allowance of the above-captioned application, the Examiner is invited to contact the Applicants' undersigned representative at the address and telephone number indicated below.

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September 22, 2006

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